

"Feels lacking in agreement on a broad communications plan - tone, wording, how we agree central social media messaging - more cohesion would help the public."

"Humility - agree mistakes, admit its tough - remove the pointless hubris of saying we can get this right all the time...just say we are doing our best - this is going well - this needs work - have a dialogue with the public not talk at them."

Delegates report that they did not feel understood or trusted by Central Government and Ministers. Delegates have reported that Ministers and some government departments still do not understand what LRFs and SCGs are, what these structures can and cannot do, and what the difference is between an LRF and an SCG. This hampers the ability to integrate the national and local approach, as the expectations from the national decision-makers are misplaced or misaligned with the civil contingencies' frameworks, or guidance materials are incorrectly framed, or include incorrect details.

The lack of trust in the local structures from Ministers and government departments and representatives also impacts on their ability to feel included as part of a greater UK wide management of the pandemic. This is because the local decision-makers cannot commit to a local leadership perspective or philosophy of approach, as they feel the national will not see or recognise that approach, or that developing a local approach and associated communications will be pointless due to the announcement-led communication strategy at national level. This undermines any building of integrity and trust in the local decision-makers as they are the public face of the government approach at local level and acts to deflate any momentum of local actions.

"I have been exceedingly disappointed by the lack of understanding shown in relation to the LRF structures especially by people who work in government departments or have a responsibility as an MP for work in this area. This has led to feeling of a lack of trust and confidence from those people in the incredible ability of people working at a local level to deal with the situation."

"There is too much reliance on national leadership and failure to perhaps see, or trust in local innovation opportunities to "get ahead".

In order to enhance the ongoing management of the pandemic, participants called for wider dissemination and communication of a strategic plan for the emergency management community and the public.

"Clarity of the National strategy - are we trying to eradicate, contain, live with..... COVID each has a very different style of response. If we can understand the long term strategy we can be proactive and supportive to align our actions and plans.